

families. Our troops and their families deserve better, and their elected leaders can do better.

Here in Washington, we have our differences on the way forward in Iraq, and we will debate them openly. Yet whatever our differences, surely we can agree that our troops are worthy of this funding and that we have a responsibility to get it to them without further delay.

Thank you for listening. May God bless our troops.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:10 p.m. in the Cross Hall at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; and Qais Khazali, member, Khazali network, and Shi'a extremist leader. He also referred to H.R. 1591.

Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval the “U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans’ Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007”

May 1, 2007

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 1591, the “U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans’ Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007.”

This legislation is objectionable because it would set an arbitrary date for beginning the withdrawal of American troops without regard to conditions on the ground; it would micromanage the commanders in the field by restricting their ability to direct the fight in Iraq; and it contains billions of dollars of spending and other provisions completely unrelated to the war.

Precipitous withdrawal from Iraq is not a plan to bring peace to the region or to make our people safer here at home. The mandated withdrawal in this bill could embolden our enemies—and confirm their belief that America will not stand behind its commitments. It could lead to a safe haven in Iraq for terrorism that could be used to attack America and freedom-loving people around

the world, and is likely to unleash chaos in Iraq that could spread across the region. Ultimately, a precipitous withdrawal could increase the probability that American troops would have to one day return to Iraq—to confront an even more dangerous enemy.

The micromanagement in this legislation is unacceptable because it would create a series of requirements that do not provide the flexibility needed to conduct the war. It would constrict how and where our Armed Forces could engage the enemy and defend the national interest, and would provide confusing guidance on which of our enemies the military could engage. The result would be a marked advantage for our enemies and greater danger for our troops, as well as an unprecedented interference with the judgments of those who are charged with commanding the military.

Beyond its direction of the operation of the war, the legislation is also unacceptable for including billions of dollars in spending and other provisions that are unrelated to the war, are not an emergency, or are not justified. The Congress should not use an emergency war supplemental to add billions in spending to avoid its own rules for budget discipline and the normal budget process. War supplemental funding bills should remain focused on the war and the needs of our men and women in uniform who are risking their lives to defend our freedoms and preserve our Nation’s security.

Finally, this legislation is unconstitutional because it purports to direct the conduct of the operations of the war in a way that infringes upon the powers vested in the Presidency by the Constitution, including as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. For these reasons, I must veto this bill.

George W. Bush

The White House,
May 1, 2007.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 2.

**Memorandum on Transfer of
Defense Articles and Services in
Support of the Southern Sudan
Security Sector Reform (SSR)
Program**

April 25, 2007

Presidential Determination No. 2007-17

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Transfer of Defense Articles and
Services in Support of the Southern Sudan
Security Sector Reform (SSR) Program

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, including section 40(g) of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA) and section 301 of title 25, United States Code, I hereby:

- Determine and certify that the transaction, encompassing U.S. Government-funded transfers and commercial exports of defense articles and services necessary for an SSR program for the security sector of the Government of Southern Sudan, including support for: transformation of the Sudan People's Liberation Army from a guerrilla force into a smaller, conventional force; the Sudan People's Liberation Movement; a protective service detail, police service, intelligence, and other law enforcement entities of the Government of Southern Sudan; and private entities involved in the SSR program, is essential to the national security interests of the United States;
- Waive the prohibitions in section 40 of the AECA related to such a transaction; and
- Assign to you the functions of the President under section 40(g)(2) of the AECA to consult with and submit reports to the Congress for proposed specific transfers or exports, 15 days prior to permitting them to proceed, that are necessary for and within the scope of this waiver determination and the transaction referred to herein.

You are authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress and ar-

range for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 2.

**Remarks Following Discussions With
President Alvaro Uribe Velez of
Colombia**

May 2, 2007

President Bush. It's been my honor to welcome a true democrat, a strong leader, and a friend, the President of Colombia. We had a long discussion.

First, Mr. President, Laura and I remember fondly our trip to your beautiful country. It was my second trip to Colombia, my first to your capital, and it was a very special occasion. And we thank you and the First Lady for such gracious hospitality.

Secondly, we had a discussion today about an important vote that our Congress must take, and that is a vote to confirm a free trade agreement with Colombia. This agreement is good for the United States. It's good for job creators, farmers, workers. This agreement is good for Colombia. It's good for job creators and workers and farmers.

This agreement has strategic implications. It is very important for this Nation to stand with democracies that protect human rights and human dignity, democracies based upon the rule of law. So the free trade agreement with Colombia and Peru and Panama, these agreements are more than just trade votes; they're signals to South America that we stand with nations that are willing to make hard decisions on behalf of the people.

The President is here to speak strongly about his record, and it's a good, solid record. I thank the Members of Congress for giving him a hearing. We expect them to be open-minded, to listen to his record. And I urge the Congress to pass a trade agreement with Colombia and Peru and Panama because it's in our interest that they do so.

And so, Mr. President, it's great to see you. *Bienvenidos.*

President Uribe. *Muchas gracias, Presidente.*